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DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION: INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Status of preparatory activities for the International Conference on Population and Development

Report of the Secretary-General of the Conference

SUMMARY

The present report has been prepared in response to Economic and Social Council resolution 1991/93, in paragraph 11 of which the Council requests the Secretary-General of the International Conference on Population and Development to report to it at its substantive sessions of 1992, 1993 and 1994 on the progress made in all aspects of the preparatory activities for the Conference.

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I. ORGANIZATION OF PREPARATORY ACTIVITIES

1. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), in consultation with the Department of Economic and Social Development of the United Nations Secretariat, is responsible for coordinating the overall organizational preparations for the International Conference on Population and Development, including the search for extrabudgetary resources, the promotion of regional and national preparatory activities, and of activities designed to increase awareness of the Conference issues, and the maintenance of close relationships with national Governments. UNFPA will also provide programme-related substantive information to help ensure the operational orientation of the Conference and its preparatory process.

2. The Department of Economic and Social Development, in consultation with UNFPA, is responsible for coordinating the substantive aspects of the preparations for the Conference, including the six expert group meetings, the review and appraisal of the World Population Plan of Action, 1/ and the formulation of draft recommendations.

3. Based on the need for maximum economy, as requested by the Economic and Social Council in resolution 1989/91, the secretariat of the Conference has been organized to make full use of existing resources of UNFPA and the Department of Economic and Social Development. However, in order to coordinate substantive preparatory activities for the Conference, two professional and two administrative-support staff are to be recruited by the Department of Economic and Social Development. Similarly, two professional and two administrative-support staff are to be recruited by UNFPA for the organizational and financial aspects of the Conference and for the dissemination of information. These eight project posts have been authorized by the General Assembly in resolutions 46/185 (sect. 13) and 46/186.

II. EXPERT GROUP MEETINGS

4. The Economic and Social Council, in resolution 1991/93, authorized the Secretary-General of the Conference to convene six expert group meetings to discuss population and development issues that require the greatest attention during the forthcoming decade from the international community and from the Conference. Each expert group will include 15 internationally renowned experts, invited in their personal capacities, along with representatives of relevant units, bodies and organizations of the United Nations system and selected intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. A special effort has been made to include as many women as possible among the experts and to have a full range of relevant scientific disciplines and geographical regions represented. Each expert group meeting will last five days.

5. The United Nations Secretariat, in consultation with UNFPA, has prepared a substantive background document for each meeting. It was agreed that technical papers would be prepared by each of the experts, and technical

contributions would be provided by intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and by the specialized agencies and other organizations and bodies of the United Nations system. At the conclusion of each meeting, the participants would adopt a set of recommendations which would be submitted to the Conference Preparatory Committee at its second session, scheduled to meet from 16 to 19 August 1993.

A. Expert Group Meeting on Population, Environment and Development

6. The meeting was held at United Nations Headquarters from 20 to 24 January 1992 and was attended by invited experts in the field of population, environment and development; representatives of the United Nations system of organizations; policymakers; and representatives of both intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

7. The Meeting examined the trends and critical linkages between population, the environment and sustainable development, and the results of those linkages, in the form of environmental stress. The impact of population change and socio-economic development on rural and urban environments was discussed. The participants then addressed issues relating to the demographic effects of environmental stress and identified a series of conflicts and complementary relationships between population, environment and development policies. The participants adopted 18 recommendations.

B. Expert Group Meeting on Population Policies and Programmes

8. The Meeting, hosted by the Government of Egypt, took place from 12 to 16 April 1992 in Cairo. It placed special emphasis on the full mobilization of resources for population policies and programmes for the developing countries, both at the international and national levels.

9. The first part of the Meeting analysed the global evolution of population policies since 1984. National experiences in the major regions of the world (Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, Western Asia and Northern Africa, and the more developed countries) were reviewed. The second part of the Meeting focused on population programmes: population experiences since the adoption of the World Population Plan of Action in 1974 were reviewed and two case studies (Indonesia and Rwanda) were analysed. An assessment of needs was also part of the Meeting's deliberations. The third major item on the agenda dealt with the mobilization of resources: domestic (public, private and non-governmental), bilateral and multilateral; and resources for the least developed countries. Finally, the Meeting discussed future directions and challenges in the field of policies and programmes. Twenty-one recommendations, were adopted by the Group.

C. Expert Group Meeting on Population and Women

10. The Meeting will deal with the linkages between strengthening the roles and socio-economic status of women and population dynamics, giving particular emphasis to issues such as adolescent motherhood, maternal and child health, education and employment, and women's access to resources and services. The Meeting is scheduled to be held in Gaborone, at the invitation of the Government of Botswana, from 22 to 26 June 1992.

11. The Meeting will begin with a general discussion of the linkages between population trends and women's status in society. Under a second item, on the study of the relationships between women, health and mortality, the Group will analyse gender differences in health risks and access to services, maternal mortality and reproductive health, and the case of AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. The relationships between the status of women, levels of fertility and access to family planning are also to be discussed; particular emphasis is to be given to adolescent pregnancy, motherhood and marriage. Also to be the subject of discussion are women's education and its impact on fertility levels and on child welfare and survival, linkages between women's economic activity and population dynamics; and population, environment and development: issues of special concern for women.

12. Participants will draft and adopt a set of recommendations to be presented to the Preparatory Committee for the Conference at its second session.

D. Other expert group meetings

13. Three other expert group meetings are scheduled to take place, as follows:

(a) Family Planning, Health and Family Well-being; to be hosted by the Government of India; Bangalore, 26-30 October 1992;

(b) Population Growth and Demographic Structure; to be hosted by the Government of France; Paris, 16-20 November 1992;

(c) Population Distribution and Migration; to be held in Latin America, 18-23 January 1993.

III. REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

14. The Economic and Social Council, in resolution 1991/93, invited the regional commissions to convene meetings or conferences to review the experience gained in population policies and programmes in their regions, bearing in mind the relationship between such policies and programmes and development issues, and to propose future action, as part of their contribution to the preparatory activities for the International Conference.

In response, each regional commission plans to convene a regional population conference.

15. The Fourth Asian and Pacific Population Conference, jointly sponsored by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and UNFPA will be held in Denpasar, Indonesia, from 19 to 27 August 1992. The theme of the conference will be Population and sustainable development: goals and strategies into the twenty-first century. Three seminars have already been held: on population, environment and sustainable development (13-18 May 1991, Jomtien, Thailand); on migration and urbanization (21-25 January 1992, Seoul, Republic of Korea); and on planning and implementation of family planning/family health and welfare programmes (17-21 March 1992, Beijing, China). The conference will include a meeting of senior officials (19-25 August 1992), followed by a two-day ministerial meeting (26-27 August 1992).

16. The Third African Population Conference, jointly organized by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and UNFPA, is scheduled to be held in early December 1992 in Dakar, Senegal. The first session of the preparatory committee met in Dakar from 10 to 12 September 1991 and defined the theme of the conference as Population, family, and sustainable development. The conference will address five major issues: assessment of the level of implementation of the Kilimanjaro Programme of Action; 2/ structure and dynamics of family formation in Africa; the African family in the context of socio-economic development; strategies for sustainable development; and emerging population problems and new orientations and strategies. The second session of the preparatory committee will take place in Dakar from 1 to 3 June 1992.

17. The European Population Conference, jointly convened by the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the Council of Europe and UNFPA, will take place in Geneva, Switzerland, from 23 to 26 March 1993. The principal themes of the conference will be as follows: international migration; fertility and the family; health and mortality; population growth and age structure: selected consequences; and international cooperation in the field of population: perspectives on global population change. The conference will review developments in the area of population which have occurred since the Intergovernmental Meeting on Population on the ECE region, held in Sofia, Bulgaria, in October 1984. The second Meeting of the organizing committee for the conference was held from 16 to 18 January 1992 in Geneva.

18. The Regional Population Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean, jointly sponsored by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and UNFPA is scheduled to be held in Mexico City in May/June 1993. The conference will be preceded by a Meeting of government experts which will be held in Saint Lucia in October 1992. Six thematic papers will be discussed at that meeting, on the following topics: population growth, fertility and mortality transition, demographic structure and distribution, and migration; the Caribbean subregion; population policies and programmes; population growth and distribution, environment and sustainable development;

women and population dynamics; and family planning programmes. The meeting will examine the principal items on the agenda for the regional conference and make appropriate recommendations.

19. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the League of Arab States and UNFPA will jointly sponsor the Regional Population Conference for the Arab World, tentatively scheduled to take place in Amman, Jordan, from 4 to 9 April 1993. The conference will include a three-day expert group meeting, immediately followed by a two-day ministerial Meeting. The expert group meeting, which will be attended by consultants and one official from each country in the region, will discuss seven commissioned papers dealing with the following issues: population, environment and development; population growth and demographic structure; population distribution and internal migration; international migration; population and women; family planning, health and family well-being; and population policies and programmes. The expert group Meeting will examine a draft declaration reflecting the discussion on the above-mentioned issues, to be submitted to the ministerial Meeting for consideration and adoption. The declaration adopted by the ministerial meeting will be submitted to the International Conference.

IV. NATIONAL ACTIVITIES

20. In order for the International Conference on Population and Development, to achieve its goals and to ensure that all countries contribute to and participate in it, preparations at the national level must be undertaken. The Conference Secretary-General has therefore requested that a national committee be established in each country to serve as a focal point for preparatory activities and for the Conference itself. The national committee will undertake a variety of preparatory activities, including conferences and Meetings, and will coordinate the preparation of a national report on population, which will address the population situation, policies and programmes of the country concerned.

21. Each national report on population will include information on the country's demographic situation (past and current, and future outlook); the country's population policy and programme framework, including national perception of population issues, evolution and current status of population policy, and information concerning programme sectors such as maternal and child health and family planning; population information, education and communication; population data collection and analysis; women, population and development; population and the environment; and youth, AIDS and ageing. The report will also cover the operational aspects of programme implementation, such as the national implementation strategy, financial aspects of the population programme, and monitoring and evaluation.

22. Each report will also highlight the constraints encountered in the operational implementation of the World Population Plan of Action and the recommendations adopted at the (1984) International Conference on Population,

for the further implementation of the Plan 3/ and other recommendations adopted as a result of the reviews and appraisals of the Plan. It will focus on practical, concrete steps that need to be taken to reach population goals in each country. The Conference secretariat will provide to all Governments an annotated outline for the national reports.

V. SEVENTH POPULATION INQUIRY AND MONITORING ACTIVITIES

23. Using the results of a series of population inquiries, the United Nations has been compiling the views and policies of Member States in the field of population since 1963. The results of the second population inquiry were a major element in the preparatory work for the (1974) World Population Conference, as were those of the fourth population inquiry for the Conference held in 1984. The Secretariat has already sent to Member States copies of the questionnaire for the Seventh United Nations Population Inquiry among Governments. It is expected that by the end of the current year, the majority of Governments will have replied to the questionnaire.

24. In accordance with the World Population Plan of Action, population trends and policies are monitored by the Department of Economic and Social Development of the United Nations Secretariat. Since 1984, when the International Conference on Population was held, in Mexico City, the United Nations has also been requested to monitor multilateral population programmes. The Secretary-General has assigned that task to UNFPA. The monitoring is undertaken on a continuous basis, and the results are biennially examined by the Population Commission. The results of the monitoring exercises will be an important element in the preparatory activities of the International Conference on Population and Development.

VI. INTER-AGENCY COORDINATION

25. In a letter dated 23 August 1991, the Conference Secretary-General wrote to all United Nations agencies and organizations involved in the field of population to inform them of the Conference and to request that they appoint a focal point for it. All focal points, who will coordinate their agency's or organization's participation in the Conference and its preparatory process, have now been designated.

26. In October 1991 the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) established the Ad hoc Task Force for the International Conference on Population and Development to ensure inter-agency coordination and participation by United Nations bodies in the Conference and its preparatory process. An informal Meeting of the Task Force was convened by the Conference Secretary-General on 27 January 1992; the first formal Meeting is tentatively scheduled for 6 July 1992, during the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council.

VII. PARTICIPATION OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

27. Selected intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations have been invited to participate in the expert group Meetings according to their areas of expertise. Intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations with specific involvement in population activities may also participate in the regional population conferences and in the meetings of the Conference Preparatory Committee.

28. The Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (CONGO) established a Planning Committee for the International Conference on Population and Development on 5 March 1991. The Committee will coordinate and facilitate the participation of non-governmental organizations in the Conference. It is at present studying the possibility of organizing an international consultation of non-governmental organizations prior to the Conference.

29. The International Union for the Scientific Study of Population (IUSSP), which cooperated with the United Nations in the organization of previous population conferences (Rome, 1954, and Belgrade, 1965), will devote a special plenary session to the 1994 Conference at its General Conference in Montreal, 24 August-1 September 1993. Other major non-governmental organizations are also planning to include in their programmes of work items related to the 1994 Conference.

VIII. INFORMATION ACTIVITIES

30. The International Conference on Population and Development will benefit substantially from public awareness and support of its objectives through coordinated public information activities at the national, regional and international levels. However, the budget approved for the biennium 1992-1993 does not provide any funds for this purpose. The Conference secretariat has begun to issue and distribute globally a quarterly newsletter, POPULATION 94, and is seeking additional extrabudgetary funds for public information activities for 1992-1993.

IX. FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS AND STATUS OF FUNDING

31. In section 13 of resolution 46/185, the General Assembly endorsed the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) to provide regular budget funding for the International Conference on Population and Development and requested the Secretary-General to make all necessary efforts to seek voluntary contributions for the Conference.

32. For the biennium 1992-1993, the General Assembly, in resolution 46/186, voted appropriations from the programme budget, which includes the amount of

$1,432,000 for the International Conference. An additional $558,400 for the same biennium was to be sought from extrabudgetary resources. The overall requirements for the preparation and holding of the Conference have been estimated at $5,651,000 (at revised 1991 rates), comprising $3,000,700 in non-conference-servicing costs and $2,650,300 for conference servicing.

33. Two trust funds have been established by the Secretary-General. The first, the Trust Fund for the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development is to be used as a primary source of financing for conference preparatory activities. Thus far, contributions to the Trust Fund, received from the Netherlands, Sweden and the United States of America, total approximately $1,000,000. Denmark has pledged approximately $103,834.

34. The second fund - the Voluntary Fund for Supporting Developing Countries' Participation in the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development - was established to facilitate the participation of developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, in the preparatory process and the Conference itself. Thus far, contributions, received from Finland and Spain, total approximately $101,585. An additional $250,000 has been pledged by Sweden for 1994.

35. A UNFPA Trust Fund has been established for the purpose of supporting national preparatory activities, including Meetings and studies at the country level, and activities increasing awareness of the Conference. Thus far, a contribution of $235,319.63 from Finland has been made to the UNFPA Trust Fund, and $250,000 has been pledged by Sweden for 1993.

36. The Conference Secretary-General is continuing her fund-raising efforts for the above-mentioned trust funds. Additional contributions are expected in the future.

X. MEETINGS OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE

37. The second session of the Preparatory Committee is to take place at United Nations Headquarters, from 16 to 19 August 1993, following the twenty-seventh session of the Population Commission. The session will review the status of Conference preparations, including the reports of the expert group meetings and the results of the regional population conferences. The third session is expected to be held in early 1994 to review the documentation for the Conference, including the draft recommendations. In preparing the draft recommendations, the World Population Plan of Action, the recommendations for further implementation of the Plan and other relevant documents will be taken into account.

XI. SITE AND DATES OF THE CONFERENCE

38. Initially, the Government of Tunisia had indicated an interest in acting as host to the Conference. The invitation was, however, withdrawn in November 1991. The Government of Turkey also expressed its interest in acting

as host. The Government of Egypt also expressed its willingness to act as host. Its offer was confirmed during a visit to Cairo by the Secretary-General of the Conference in April 1992. The Secretary-General of the Conference will present in her oral statement to the Economic and Social Council a report on the site and dates of the 1994 Conference.

Notes

1/ See Report of the United Nations World Population Conference, Bucharest, 19-30 August 1974 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.75.XIII.3), chap. I.

2/ See "Recommendations of the regional commissions for the further implementation of the World Population Programme of Action at the regional level" (E/CONF.76/6), annex V.

3/ See Report of the International Conference on Population, 1984, Mexico City, 6-14 August 1984 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.84.XIII.8), chap. I.B.